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Transport Belmire Inc.

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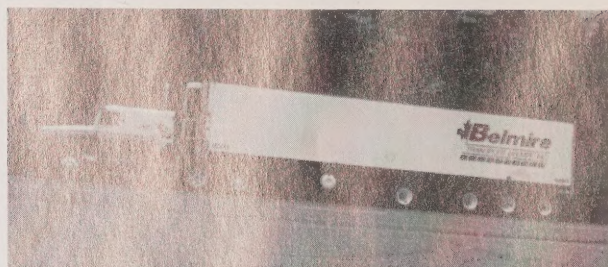


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# FleetSmart PROFILES

## TRANSPORT BELMIRE INC.

*Attention to Detail  
a Key to Company's  
Success*



Transport Belmire's corporate philosophy is to provide high-quality services at a reasonable price. Toward this end, the company promotes a team-oriented work environment and pays close attention to controlling expenses, training employees and ensuring the reliability of its fleet equipment.

### About the company

Transport Belmire Inc. was founded 25 years ago by Jean-Guy Lemire as a one-truck company offering carrier services in the Montréal area. The firm has enjoyed tremendous growth over the years and now operates a fleet of 5 straight trucks, 71 tandem tractors and about 200 trailers, 75 per cent of which are refrigerated. Transport Belmire's area of operation has also expanded to encompass all of Quebec, Atlantic Canada and Ontario. The company has approximately 125 full-time employees.

### Pride in personnel and comprehensive driver training

Transport Belmire takes great pride in the quality of its personnel and uses strict hiring and training practices to ensure a work force that is committed to providing an exceptional level of service.

service

# opportunity

The hiring and training of drivers is a case in point. After passing entry-level tests, new drivers spend at least one week with a driving instructor to familiarize themselves with the company's equipment, customer requirements and major routes. During this period, drivers are also trained to meet company standards in relation to progressive shifting, speed and road handling, and accident prevention techniques.

Drivers who successfully complete the training program are accepted as new members of the Transport Belmire team and are assigned vehicles. However, the training doesn't end there. Regular update sessions are held to inform drivers of changes in company or customer policies, new equipment and driving procedures, and any legislative changes that affect drivers.

## **A focus on fuel efficiency and safety**

To maintain a high level of service while keeping its prices competitive, Transport Belmire has focused on controlling its operating expenses. In particular, fuel consumption – one of the major expenses incurred in the carrier business – is closely monitored.

In addition to training drivers in fuel-efficient driving techniques, the company is taking full advantage of the capabilities of new electronic engines to assist the driver in proper shifting, r.p.m. management and overall better operation of the vehicle. Also as a means of controlling fuel consumption and ensuring safe driving habits, Transport Belmire has established a highway speed limit of 95 kilometres per hour for its vehicles.

As a result of measures such as these, Transport Belmire has reduced its fleet fuel consumption and vehicle operating costs by about five per cent over the



## *Keeping tabs on maintenance*

**In 1994, Transport Belmire installed fleet management software that, among other functions, tracks the maintenance performed on its vehicles. For each vehicle in the fleet, the software lists all government-regulated maintenance requirements as well as the manufacturer's requirements.**





**The service schedules for individual vehicles are based on the distance travelled or the time between servicing, depending on the type of load carried. Thanks to the company policy of operating a young fleet, many units are still under warranty at the time of resale, which further minimizes preventive maintenance costs.**

past five years. On the Montréal-Toronto route, for example, the company saves up to 50 litres of fuel per trip.

## **Ensuring dependable equipment and quality maintenance**

The best personnel in the world cannot provide high-quality service without dependable equipment. With this in mind, Transport Belmire has a policy of maintaining its fleet in top operating condition. All vehicles are purchased new and replaced after five years. The company tries to spec new vehicles to match the existing fleet in order to minimize training requirements and the company's investment in spare parts.

Preventive maintenance is performed by an outside service provider located near Transport Belmire's depot in Montréal. Company managers, including Mr. Lemire himself, President of the firm, regularly visit the shop to ensure that a high level of service is being provided.

The company's electronic engines support preventive maintenance by detecting problems and transferring this information to the garage's computer during diagnostic checks. In addition to minimizing diagnostic time, this approach reduces maintenance costs by allowing repairs to be made before the problem affects engine performance to the point where it is noticed by a driver or mechanic.

## **Tracking operations**

Transport Belmire also pays close attention to minimizing the number of empty kilometres travelled by its fleet vehicles. Most vehicles are dedicated to specific customers, who often supply return loads in the form of raw materials or packaging. The company also has

contracts with sales agents in some cities to pick up loads for the return trip to Montréal. Cellular phones are used to maintain regular contact between the drivers and dispatch.

Transport Belmire's information management system records load origin and destination, the truck used, fuel consumption and other factors. The system also provides summary reports by truck, destination, customer, driver or any combination of the above.

As a result of its attention to detail and service commitment, Transport Belmire estimates that customer service needs are met or exceeded 98 per cent of the time. In fact, Mr. Lemire says the company has never lost a customer because of quality of service. Many of the customers who do leave to take advantage of lower prices eventually return to the company.

"Although the high-technology equipment on the market provides tools by which management can better attain its goals, real success still resides in the basic principles of providing a quality service with a competent team," says Mr. Lemire. This recipe for success has certainly worked for Transport Belmire Inc.



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